

MPA MANAGEMENT PLANNING - PART 3

MODULE 6

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Acknowledgements

The material in modules 4, 5, and 6 was derived from:

The NOAA Coastal Services Center's *MPA Management Planning for Effectiveness manual* and from the *How is Your MPA Doing? guidebook*

Every participant will also receive a copy of the guidebook.

OVERVIEW

Reaching the goals and outcomes established in the earlier phases of the planning process requires further phases of evaluation, and the ability to adapt information gained from the process into the management plan. Evaluation plans and key indicators will help MPA managers progress towards efficient allocation of resources and accurate assessments of impacts.

Together, modules 4, 5 and 6 are designed to help you develop your skills and facility with the tools and processes of management planning, including strategic planning, planning process, performance indicators, and effectiveness evaluation. Today's module, module 6, concentrates on program evaluation and its links to site plans.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- ✓ Understand the connection from goals/objectives to measurable performance indicators.
- ✓ Learn the steps involved in developing a MPA evaluation plan
- ✓ Gain practice and experience creating a full management plan for a real MPA

INDICATORS OF EFFECTIVE KNOWLEDGE

During the previous two days (modules 4 and 5), participants developed skills to:

- Discuss the roles and utility of various kinds of management plans
- Describe the drivers, baselines, and niche of their aquatic preserve program
- Use the SCORE Card approach to enable more effective MPA planning
- Understand the role and purpose of planning processes
- Create a basic planning process at the project and site scale

In today's module (module 6), participants will develop the skills & knowledge needed to:

- Select appropriate performance measures based on goals and objectives
- Select useful indicators and develop an evaluation plan
- Know what the next steps are for putting the plans into action.

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Long-term indicators of effective management planning skills:

- ✓ Ability to identify whether a site plan, regional plan, or system plan is appropriate
- ✓ Ability to distinguish between strategic and operational planning
- ✓ Ongoing awareness of drivers, baselines and niches of their MPA
- ✓ Ongoing capability to initiate development of new plans as needed
- ✓ Ability to develop a planning process for application to a real-world situation
- ✓ Ability to select informative indicators for evaluation
- ✓ Ongoing evaluation of effectiveness of site plans, using an evaluation plan

LESSON PLAN

6.1 REVIEW – MANAGEMENT PLANNING

The instructor will review the important concepts of day 5, focusing on the development of the site-level planning processes.

6.2 INTRODUCTION TO PROGRAM EVALUATION

Exercise 6.1 - How Are You Evaluating Your Progress?

Group discussion on the following questions:

- *Are you making progress on your goals?*
- *Are you monitoring your progress?*
- *Would your MPA benefit from a more formal evaluation process?*

Introduction to Evaluation

Evaluation is the process that allows us to determine why we are being effective in progressing toward our goals and desired outcomes. Evaluation can be formally described as the systematic collection of information about activities, characteristics, and outcomes of programs to make judgments about the program, improve effectiveness, and/or inform decisions about future programming (adapted from Patton, 1997).

Why evaluate?

In order to more efficiently allocate limited resources, managers need to evaluate both individual projects and overall program efforts to determine their impacts. Managers frequently rely on anecdotal evidence to support their effectiveness, but efforts to more accurately and meaningfully measure project impacts on marine resources and resource users are increasing. Evaluating effectiveness is desirable for:

- Promoting adaptive management
- Improving project planning
- Promoting accountability

Benefits to you:

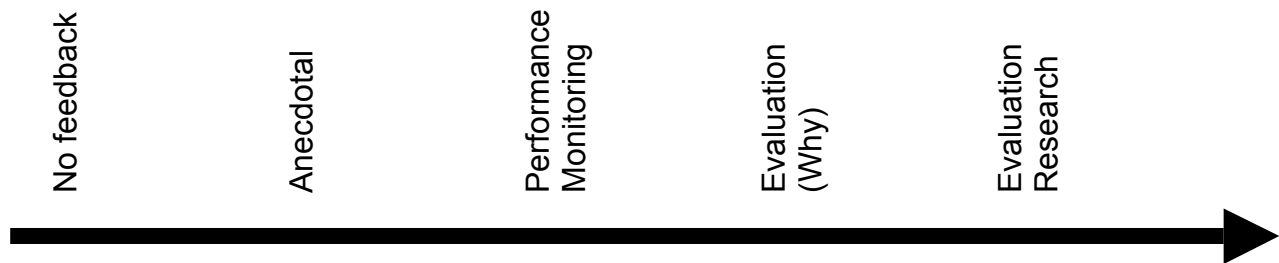
- Make your job easier
- Show program impacts
- Your program is evaluated on what YOU determine is important

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The Evaluation Continuum

There are a large variety of methods of evaluation, from no evaluation at all, to rigorously planned evaluation research:



Discussion - Current Evaluation Processes

At what level are you currently evaluating your programs?

“SMART” Objectives

Recall from Day 4 that an outcome or goal is a broad statement of what the MPA is trying to achieve. A goal is a qualitative or non-measurable outcome that is simple to understand and communicate. An objective is a specific measurable statement of what must be accomplished to achieve a specific goal. When writing objectives as part of a planning or evaluation process, objectives should be as detailed and specific as possible.

Outcomes must be measurable. A measurable outcome is a “smart objective.” SMART stands for (in English):

Specific
Measurable
Audience or issue focused
Reasonable
Timely

Planning process models provide an easy starting point for the selection of meaningful and realistic indicators to monitor effectiveness, because you must understand the overall program logic in order to identify what needs to be measured.

Exercise 6.2 – “SMART” Goals and Objectives

Use your site-level outcomes to write “SMART” goals and objectives for each outcome. Focus on biophysical, socioeconomic, and governance categories. (These goals and objectives will be used in the next section.)

Indicators

A key component of the evaluation process is the selection and ongoing measurement of indicators. An indicator is any observable or measurable variable that can provide feedback on whether the existing management plan is having the desired results. Indicators can document changes occurring in the MPA. For example, some indicators commonly used in MPA management are: fish yield, species abundance, income of fisher people, tourist satisfaction, and so on. Usually several indicators should be monitored to best gauge the overall effect of the management plan.

CASE STUDY: Cu Lao Cham MPA

6.3 THE EVALUATION PROCESS

Overview of the Management Effectiveness Initiative

The Marine Protected Area Management Effectiveness Initiative is a collaborative, international project involving the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA-Marine), and the World Conservation Union (IUCN). In summary, many people and agencies worldwide have been working on the issue of measuring management effectiveness. Their goals and outcomes have been as follows:

Goal

- Improvement management of MPAs by providing managers, planners, and other decision-makers with methods for assessing effectiveness of MPAs

Objectives

- Develop MPA-specific indicators and a guidebook for MPA managers
- Field-test and refine indicators and guidebook
- Increase awareness and use of monitoring and evaluation in MPAs

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One of the major objectives that was identified was the production of a guidebook for MPA managers, *“How Is Your MPA Doing?”* (Copies of this book are being distributed to all participants in this workshop). The book’s major purpose is to help MPA managers and conservation practitioners evaluate and adaptively improve the effectiveness of their MPA efforts through time.

The major audience for “How Is Your MPA Doing?” is expected to consist of managers and marine conservation practitioners. However, it is also useful for people who will be impacted by MPAs in any way or are interested in MPAs (e.g., decision-makers; local people who live near MPAs).

Framework of the Guidebook

The book presents an overview of the methodology of developing planning processes and management strategies for MPAs, concentrating on three different types of goals or outcomes:

- **Biophysical**
- **Socioeconomic**
- **Governance**

Exercise 6.3 - Assessing Your List of Site Goals

Based on the long-term outcomes identified in site planning processes, you will match your site goals (developed in the previous section) to the goals provided in the guidebook, according to the 3 categories (biophysical, socioeconomic, governance.) Start by looking at how the outcomes (short/mid/long) from your site planning process could be matched to goals in the book.

- *Which of these goals are ones you are working towards?*
- *Are there any goals listed in the guidebook that you would like to add to your site-level planning process?*
- *Do you have goals/outcomes that are not addressed by the goals in the guidebook?*

Write down the guidebook goals that match up with your desired outcomes. These will be used in the next section to develop a complete evaluation process for your MPA.

A large section of the book provides detailed information on 42 example *indicators* that can be used to monitor progress toward these outcomes. Indicators are tools that can be used to evaluate whether a MPA is achieving its goals and objectives. The book also provides information on how to collect data on each of these indicators, how difficult each indicator is to measure, why it is useful, and so on. The indicators discussed include:

- 10 biophysical indicators - for example, focal species abundance, water quality, etc.
- 16 socioeconomic indicators - resource use patterns, stakeholder knowledge, etc.
- 16 governance indicators - local understanding of regulations, enforcement, etc.

Finally, the book provides a step-by-step process for evaluation:

- Step 1: Selecting indicators
- Step 2: Planning your evaluation
- Step 3: Implementing the plan
- Step 4: Sharing the results

In the remainder of today's session, you will perform these four steps to develop an evaluation plan for your MPA.

Limitations of the Guidebook

The "How Is Your MPA Doing?" book is not intended to be the most important element of MPA evaluation and management. The book is not a complete listing of all possible approaches, and in particular it:

- Assumes you have well-defined goals and objectives
- Focuses on long-term goals, but it is also important to measure progress towards short- and mid-term goals.

6.4 DEVELOPING AN EVALUATION PLAN

Exercise 6.4 - STEP 1: Identifying & Evaluating Potential Indicators

Now you will use the book goals to come up with a list of measurable indicators for your site. This list is not everything you will measure, but rather a list of indicators from which you can choose. Review the guidebook goals you identified as matching up with your outcomes in Part 1, and look at the indicators associated with each of these goals. Write down indicators you think might want to monitor.

Note: you may want to brainstorm additional indicators with the rest of the group if some of your outcomes are not captured by the guidebooks' goals and associated indicators.

- *Think about what are the most critical indicators for you to monitor.*
- *Think about what you are already monitoring (refer to planning process "activities")*

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Discussion – Indicators

- *Are you already measuring your indicators?*
- *What is your current capacity to measure the indicators on your list?*
- *Would you customize this indicator to better suit your MPA?*
- *How useful would it be to measure those indicators?*

Handout 6.1: Program Evaluation Worksheet

Exercise 6.5 - Planning Your Evaluation

Separate into small groups with one or two indicators per group. From here you will follow the rest of the evaluation process as it is presented in the guidebook, using the book and the provided worksheets. The first step is to turn to the page where your indicator is presented and review that information before beginning the questions on the checklist. Then consider these questions:

- *Are you already measuring your indicators?*
- *What is your current capacity to measure the indicators on your list?*
- *Would you customize this indicator to better suit your MPA?*
- *How useful would it be to measure those indicators?*

6.5 LINKING TO SITE PLANS

Linking Performance Measures and Planning Processes to Site Plans

Review the 10 step process of developing an effective management plan.

In the assessment phase drivers were documented, baseline information was gathered, stakeholders were identified and the program's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were analyzed. This information also helps set achievable targets for management activities to accomplish. Without this information goals could be too difficult or too easy to achieve.

In the strategic planning phase goals and objectives for the site were determined. Key activities and outputs were identified, resource requirements were also identified and the evaluation for the site plan was developed. Performance measures and evaluation can and should be monitored for the goals as well as the appropriateness and efficiency of the management strategies and activities. It is important that the activities contribute to the desired outcomes.

The writing and using phase is where you begin to monitor the indicators you have selected to determine if you are on track to meet your desired outcomes and goals. It is critical that you have

a good evaluation and monitoring plan so that you can adapt your management strategies and activities if you are falling short of meeting your goals

Discussion— The Planning Process

Consider the planning process that you developed earlier.

- *Does your site-level planning process make sense?*
- *Will it help with site management plan development?*
- *Does it link to the system plan?*
- *Does your plan help you get to your identified goals and objectives?*
- *Does it get you towards a measurable site management plan?*
- *Will it help avoid pitfalls?*
- *Will it increase your chances of being able to monitor if you are being effective?*

Accountability

Evaluating effectiveness contributes to accountability. There is a need for accountability at multiple levels

- Managers want to know they're being effective, achieving their goals.
- Managers are accountable to agencies/organizations
- Managers are accountable to communities.

6.6 NEXT STEPS

Exercise 6.6 - Review & Discuss

Review & discuss the major topics (listed below) covered during the three modules on management planning. You will assess your understanding of each topic, what you have accomplished with your site plan, and what the next steps are for implementing the plan.

- *What have you learned? What more do you wish to learn in the future?*
- *Do you feel you have the skills you need to manage a MPA effectively?*
- *What are the next three things that you want to do in your role as a MPA manager?*
- *Do you have the resources you need to do those three things?*
- *Do you feel you know where to go to get more information?*